Quoted by Historian

De Gaulle Viewed Death Of JFK as a Conspiracy

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International Herald Tribune

PARIS, Oct. 19 — To the large body of Frenchmen who believe President Kennedy was the victim of a deep conspiracy, the chief Frenchman himself has now been added — President de Gaulle.

A new book by historian Raymond Tournoux, France's leading and respected de Gaulle authority, quotes the General as saying:

"The police were in on the job. Either they ordered it to be done, or else they allowed it to be done. In any case, they are in on the job."

According to Tournoux, this was de Gaulle's considered conclusion upon his return from Kennedy's Washington funeral in late 1963.

The General's views are reported in Tournoux's new study "La Tragedie du General" (The General's Tragedy). It will be published here in a few days, although the magazine Paris-Match has already published extracts.

[Asked in Washington if the White House was aware of the sentiments attributed to de Gaulle, President Johnson's press secretary, George Christian, said, "I have never heard of it until this moment."]

Tournoux, who gathered his material from exhaustive research among the persons with whom the General talks freely, reports the following:

In his refusal to believe that the Kennedy assassination could have been the work of a lone fanatic, de Gaulle compared it to assassination attempts against himself here in France.

"His story is my story. What happened to Kennedy almost happened to me. The assassination of the President of the United States in Dallas is the assassination which could have struck down the French Chief of State in 1960, 1961, 1962 or 1963."

De Gaulle also saw a parallel between the already mounting conflict between whites and Negroes in America and the struggle between Algerian Moslems and Europeans as a background to the assassination attempt.

"It's like a cowboy and Indian story. But it's really only an OAS story. (The OAS, or Secret Army Organization, was a terrorist group which fought to keep Algeria French.)

"The police are thick with the Algerian ultras. The American ultras are the Ku Klux Klan, the John Birch Society and all those secret extreme rightest associations.

"It's the story which would have happened to us if we hadn't given independence to Algeria. It's the story of races who can't get along."

For the General, Lee Harvey Oswald was only an unfortunate "front man" designated in advance as the scapegoat to set off an anti-Communist "witch hunt" to "distract attention."

"They got hold of this Communist who wasn't really one, a nullity, a fanatic . . . a marvelous accused. The idea was to make people believe that the guy acted out of fanaticism and love for Communism."

The General said "they" planned to shoot Oswald on sight to prevent a trial, but things went wrong. Oswald got suspicious and took flight. A policeman got killed. There were witnesses. A trial had to be avoided at all costs. Things might have come out.

"So the police got hold of an informer, someone they had where they wanted him. That guy killed the false assassin on the pretext of defending Kennedy's memory."

"What a laugh," concluded the General. 'Every police in the world is alike when it comes to dirty work."

If race hatred was not directly involved, Gen. de Gaulle said, the climate of violence it had created was responsible.

"The consequence of that affair could be a new war of secession. The liking for Westerns has something to do with it. It's all a Western. It's also the natural bent of Americans for witch hunts.

"Sometimes they hunt Communist witches, sometimes black witches. Believe me, America's troubles are only beginning . . . America is less and less of a stable country which can be counted on."

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